United Nations E/CN.6/2005/NGO/39

Economic and Social Council

Distr.: General
10 February 2005

Original: English

Commission on the Status of Women
Forty-ninth session
28 February-11 March 2005
Item 3 (c) (ii) of the provisional agenda*
Follow-up to the Fourth World Conference on Women and to the special session of the General Assembly entitled "Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century": implementation of strategic objectives and action in the critical areas of concern: and further actions and initiatives: current challenges and forward-looking strategies for the advancement and empowerment of women and girls

Statement presented by International Network of Liberal Women, a non-governmental organization in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council

The Secretary-General has received the following statement, which is being circulated in accordance with paragraphs 36 and 37 of Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31 of 25 July 1996.

* E/CN.6/2005/1.

05-23559 (E) 070305

Statement

The activities of the INLW are inspired on the principles of the United Nations Charter and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. INLW performs these principles which are the basis of the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW).

The INLW's main objectives are developing the awareness of women concerning their rights and political, economic, social and cultural responsibilities; reinforcing the relationships and the exchange among women from all over the world, and promoting the application of the Human Rights Declaration.

In the forty-ninth session of the Commission of the United Nations on the Status of Women (CSW), which deals with the review of the implementation of the 1995 Beijing Platform for Action and the outcome documents of the 23rd special session of the General Assembly entitled "Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century", and facing the challenges and forward-looking strategies for the advancement and empowerment of women and girls, the INLW wants to express its concern about the lack of real effectiveness of the institutional mechanisms chosen by governments to deal with the advancement of women. At the same time, the INLW wants to express that there is the need to implement the Beijing Platform for Action in order to achieve the Millennium Development Goals.

NECESSARY INSTITUTIONAL MECHANISMS AND REFORMS FOR THE EFFECTIVE IMPLEMENTATION OF WOMEN'S ADVANCEMENT

Present situation

Since the Beijing Conference, institutional mechanisms have been created to help governments to provide equal opportunities for men and women. Social perception in favor of equal opportunities for men and women has increased, as has awareness of the need to implement specific policies to integrate women from the gender perspective.

Obstacles and barriers

In some countries, there is not an appropriate distribution of human and economic resources. In some areas, there is poor comprehension of the political significance of equal opportunities for men and women concerning topics such as the participation of women in democracy and women's human rights and, consequently, there is a lack of political will, as well as of lawful means to establish efficient implementation. A large number of countries have no systems of assessment or indicators concerning policies of equal opportunities for women and men.

Therefore it is essential to:

- Propose a political agenda by governments, public institutions and political parties to set up an **Equality Legislation** and to create independent bodies devoted to guarantee the efficient implementation and accomplishment of this legislation.

- Strengthen all the institutional mechanisms, providing them with the necessary human resources and adequate budgets to guarantee their presence in the highest levels of all governmental departments and all other decision-making bodies, so that the gender perspective is integrated throughout all governmental policies.

- Guarantee that the main responsibility concerning equal opportunities for men and women is carried by governments. This guarantee must necessarily have continuity.

- Promote plans of positive action and equal opportunities for men and women in the private and public sector, as well as in the business, trade union and academic fields.

- Establish indicators to evaluate and promote the implementation of equality policies in order to have control of this implementation.

- Incorporate analysis of the gender perspective in order to allocate the necessary budgets to carry out effective gender policies.

- The responsible governmental bodies have to meet on a regular basis in order to exchange impressions and experiences and, based on best practices, reach conclusions, analyze and spread out the information at the highest levels of decision-making, and use it in basic training programs.

- Promote the participation of young women in NGOs and other social, economic, academic and media institutions in order to guarantee their continuity.

- Provide technical and economic support to public and private institutions devoted to the organization, research and assessment of activities which have as a main objective the achievement of equality.

- Provide civil society access to statistics and information concerning the gender perspective.

- Establish legislative rules in order to eliminate stereotypes and spread out positive images of relationships between men and women, and between young girls and young boys in the media.

- Include women who have experienced harassment in armed conflict situations and experts in peace-building and the prevention and resolution of conflicts, and in post-conflict peace-building at all decision-making levels.